

City of Takoma Park Safe Roadways Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2005

The City of Takoma Park Safe Roadways Committee met on Thursday, March 10, 2005 in the Municipal Building, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland.

Members Present: Greg Castano, Michael Goodno, Katherine Kelly, Steve Moody, Suzanna Banwell

Members Absent: Robert Patten, Susan Solarz, Laurie Kelly, Larry Rubin

Staff Present: Ilona Blanchard, Associate Planner, Sara Daines, Director ECD

Others Present: Sanjay Grover, Columbia Union College Student

1. Call to Order

Greg Castano, Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 6:50 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes: vote on reading, vote on adoption

Motion was made to approve the February minutes, motion was seconded, and minutes were unanimously adopted.

3. Brief Announcements / Updates

HB137: HB 137 will lower the sentence for the causing the death of a pedestrian. Katherine will ask for more information on the bill from the Rockville City Manager, Ilona will ask Suzie Ludlow (City Government & Community Liaison) for more information (dates and Council position).

Philadelphia Avenue: Greg noted that there was an article on the Safe Roadways Committee letter to the Council in the Takoma Park Newsletter (March 2005). Suzanna and Larry presented the letter to OTRA (Old Town Residents Association) February 17. Staff will prepare a memo/discussion item for the agenda, and SRC (Greg, Suzanna, Larry and any other members) should testify to the Council at the March 21 Council Worksession.

Open Meeting Law (Greg): Everyone should have the full text as sent out in the earlier e-mail. Please note all meetings and subcommittees need to post meeting time and date in advance of the meeting. Ilona will be the point person, please send her info to post

meeting publicly. Did not see anything regarding e-mail.

Barbara Matthews Meeting / Sara Daines (Greg/Sara Daines): Greg: the officers have been meeting with each other, as well as with Barbara Matthews, Ilona, and Sara Daines. Initially there was confusion over staff and Committee roles. Barbara M. clarified that it is very important to have staff involved in the work of the Committee, although the Committee did not receive a clear message from Barbara on the role of the Committee, i.e. policy vs. projects.

Sara D.: ECD staffs four committees, job is to make Committees look good. ECD facilitates process by providing administrative tasks, ensuring Committee is in compliance with the MD Open Meeting Law and other regulations that govern the Committee as a statutory Committee that falls under local governance laws. Staff can also do research and collection of data for issues that Committee is working on to facilitate decision making process, and can also offer technical expertise. Staff can facilitate communication with the Council, in that staff monitors agendas, meets with the Mayor once a week, and has information regarding the procedures and policies of the Council.

Ped safety is one of the priorities of Council, although Council does have budgetary constraints. It is also in one of the work plan items for much of ECD staff. Therefore the success of the committee is important to Staff & City Manager.

E-mail is not a very transparent form of communication. It is good for passing along information and chatting but any formal action or discussion that leads to a formal action needs to take place in the public realm (an open public meeting). Committee may want consider a listserv, this ensures that all members are included in the conversation, and can archive old e-mails for later reference in one place.

Brainstorming via e-mail may be okay, but should have face-to-face time in committee, a means that a member of the public may have an important insight that should have the opportunity to add to the discussion or be considered.

Greg: Staff is responsible for Committee. (Ques: clarify?) If the Committee looks bad, this reflects on Staff. In addition, the Committee is on ECD staff's workplan.

Q: What happens when staff and SRC are at the same meeting? This happened at the OTRA meeting the other week & was very confusing.

This can be confusing. Often when staff is invited to a Community meeting, they are there to represent the City. If the City does not have a formal position yet, Staff represents any action that has been taken so far, and any intended actions throughout the City at the staff level, that the City Manager would like represented. At the OTRA meeting, City staff (Ilona) was invited to talk about what the City is doing (now) regarding Philadelphia Avenue. This was very different from the SRC letter position. In these types of situations it can be confusing, but it will get easier. Committee members

may call Staff to coordinate prior to a meeting.

Q: Can you clarify what the proper procedure for the ICC letter was?

The ICC letter was okay to send as letter, but not in the format of a resolution. Resolutions are the language of formal bodies, but the as the letter was from citizens of the City, it should be written in a letter format. Comment: The ICC letter was confusing because it went from a letter to a resolution back to a letter.

Motion to use the listserve, with Ilona to monitor. Sara D. will be also included. Greg called for a motion, received and passed so that members may not to forward any messages (may be revisited at a later date).

4. Action Items

Matrix Subcommittee Report (Steve):

The subcommittee whittled down the original list of proposed items, divided them into policy and projects, and then categorized them according to the following areas: traffic calming, pedestrian safety, bicycles, and other.

Activity:

Greg asked the Committee to discuss the meaning of the criteria selected at the previous meeting. Then each member was given dots and asked to vote which criteria they felt was the most important.

(Criteria)

1. **Consistent** with community plans & policy/existing design standards/visual appeal, relates to mission, Dan Burden recommendations
2. **Critical Geographical Problem Areas:** high profile (in high use by pedestrians, etc.), visibility
3. **Special Populations** (school, seniors, language needs)
4. **Utility & Sustainability:** financial viability, time feasibility, using existing infrastructure, parsimonious, multi-modal, discouraging single drivers, facilitates alternative transportation
5. **Unaddressed Issues** (issues that only Safe Roadways is addressing)
6. **Equitable:** areas underserved, "geographical equity"
7. **Collaborative** with other agencies

After the Committee discussed the meaning of each criteria item, there was some discussion regarding the list presented by the Subcommittee. Suzanna asked if Philadelphia Ave could be added, which the Committee agreed to.

The Committee then split into two groups, each with half the list that had been refined by the Matrix Subcommittee. Each group checked off which criteria applied to which item on the list.

Staff was directed to tally the points for each criteria, and then to add the values to the matrix and develop scores for each project item.

The Subcommittee was tasked with meeting during the month to develop a recommendation to the Committee to present to the Council that would be discussed and voted on at the next SRC meeting. The subcommittee was asked to consider using the weights but not to apply them rigidly unless they seemed reasonable. Staff would be available to the subcommittee as a technical resource.

5. Status Reports

The status report was postponed until the next meeting.

6. Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted


Ilona Blanchard, Associate Planner

Approved

Greg Castano, Chair